1 ESDRAS 4

1611 KING JAMES VERSION

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4:1 Then the second, that had spoken of the strength of the king, began to say,
4:2 O ye men, do not men excel in strength that bear rule over sea and land and all

things in them?

4:3 But yet the king is more mighty: for he is lord of all these things, and hath dominion over them; and whatsoever he commandeth them they do.

4:4 If he bid them

make war the one against the other, they do it: if he send them out against the enemies, they go, and break down mountains walls and towers.

4:5 They slay and are slain, and

transgress
not the king's
commandment:
if they get the
victory, they bring
all to the king, as
well the spoil, as
all things else.
4:6 Likewise for
those that are no
soldiers, and have

not to do with wars, but use husbundry, when they have reaped again that which they had sown, they bring it to the king, and compel one another to pay tribute unto the king.

4:7 And yet he is but one man: if he command to kill, they kill; if he command to spare, they spare;
4:8 If he command to smite, they smite; if he command to make desolate, they

make desolate; if
he command to
build, they build;
4:9 If he command
to cut down, they
cut down; if he
command to plant,
they plant.
4:10 So all his
people and his
armies obey him:

furthermore he lieth down, he eateth and drinketh, and taketh his rest:
4:11 And these keep watch round about him, neither may any one depart, and do his own business,

neither disobey
they him in
any thing.
4:12 O ye men,
how should not the
king be mightiest,
when in such sort
he is obeyed? And
he held his tongue.
4:13 Then the
third, who had

spoken of women, and of the truth, (this was Zorobabel) began to speak.

4:14 O ye men, it is not the great king, nor the multitude of men, neither is it wine, that excelleth;

who is it then that ruleth them, or hath the lordship over them? are they not women?

4:15 Women have borne the king and all the people that bear rule by sea and land.

4:16 Even of them

came they: and they nourished them up that planted the vineyards, from whence the wine cometh.

4:17 These also make garments for men; these bring glory unto men;

and without
women cannot
men be.
4:18 Yea, and if
men have gathered
together gold and
silver, or any other
goodly thing, do
they not love a
woman which is
comely in favour

and beauty?
4:19 And letting all those things go, do they not gape, and even with open mouth fix their eyes fast on her; and have not all men more desire unto her than unto silver or gold, or

any goodly thing whatsoever?

4:20 A man leaveth his own father that brought him up, and his own country, and cleaveth unto his wife.

4:21 He sticketh not to spend his

life with his wife.
and remembereth
neither father,
nor mother,
nor country.
4:22 By this also
ye must know that
women have
dominion over
you: do ye not
labour and toil, and

give and bring all to the woman?
4:23 Yea, a man taketh his sword, and goeth his way to rob and to steal, to sail upon the sea and upon rivers;
4:24 And looketh upon a lion, and

goeth in the darkness; and when he hath stolen, spoiled, and robbed, he bringeth it to his love.

4:25 Wherefore a man loveth his wife better than father or mother.

4:26 Yea, many there be that have run out of their wits for women, and become servants for their sakes.
4:27 Many also have perished, have erred, and sinned, for women.

4:28 And now do ye not believe me? is not the king great in his power? do not all regions fear to touch him?
4:29 Yet did I see him and Apame the king's concubine, the daughter of

the admirable Bartacus, sitting at the right hand of the king,
4:30 And taking the crown from the king's head, and setting it upon her own head; she also struck the king with her left hand.

4:31 And yet for all this the king gaped and gazed upon her with open mouth: if she laughed upon him, he laughed also: but if she took any displeasure at him, the king was fain to flatter, that she

might be reconciled to him again.

4:32 O ye men, how can it be but women should be strong, seeing they do thus?

4:33 Then the king and the princes looked one upon

another: so he
began to speak
of the truth.
4:34 O ye men,
are not women
strong? great is
the earth, high is
the heaven, swift
is the sun in his
course, for he
compasseth the

heavens round about, and fetcheth his course again to his own place in one day.

4:35 Is he not great that maketh these things? therefore great is the truth, and stronger than

all things.
4:36 All the earth crieth upon the truth, and the heaven blesseth it: all works shake and tremble at it, and with it is no unrighteous thing.
4:37 Wine is wicked, the king

is wicked, women are wicked, all the children of men are wicked, and such are all their wicked works; and there is no truth in them; in their unrighteousness also they shall perish.

4:38 As for the truth, it endureth, and is always strong; it liveth and conquereth for evermore.
4:39 With her there is no accepting of persons or rewards; but

she doeth the things that are just, and refraineth from all unjust and wicked things; and all men do well like of her works.

4:40 Neither in her judgment is any

unrighteousness; and she is the strength, kingdom, power, and majesty, of all ages. Blessed be the God of truth.

4:41 And with that he held his peace. And all the people then

shouted, and said, Great is Truth, and mighty above all things.

4:42 Then said the king unto him, Ask what thou wilt more than is appointed in the writing, and we will give it thee,

because thou art found wisest; and thou shalt sit next me, and shalt be called my cousin.

4:43 Then said he unto the king, Remember thy vow, which thou hast vowed to build Jerusalem,

in the day when thou camest to thy kingdom,

4:44 And to send away all the vessels that were taken away out of Jerusalem, which Cyrus set apart, when he vowed to destroy Babylon,

and to send them again thither.

4:45 Thou also hast vowed to build up the temple, which the Edomites burned when Judea was made desolate by the Chaldees.

4:46 And now,

O lord the king, this is that which I require, and which I desire of thee, and this is the princely liberality proceeding from thyself: I desire therefore that thou make good the vow, the

performance whereof with thine own mouth thou hast vowed to the King of heaven.
4:47 Then Darius the king stood up, and kissed him, and wrote letters for him unto all the treasurers and

lieutenants and captains and governors, that they should safely convey on their way both him, and all those that go up with him to build Jerusalem.

4:48 He wrote letters also unto

the lieutenants that were in Celosyria and Phenice, and unto them in Libanus, that they should bring cedar wood from Libanus unto Jerusalem, and that they should build the city with him.

4:49 Moreover he wrote for all the Jews that went out of his realm up into Jewry, concerning their freedom, that no officer, no ruler, no lieutenant, nor treasurer, should forcibly enter into their doors;

4:50 And that all the country which they hold should be free without tribute; and that the Edomites should give over the villages of the Jews which then they held:

4:51 Yea, that there should be yearly given twenty talents to the building of the temple, until the time that it were built;
4:52 And other ten talents yearly, to maintain the

burnt offerings upon the altar every day, as they had a commandment to offer seventeen:

4:53 And that all they that went from Babylon to build the city should have free liberty,

as well they as their posterity, and all the priests that went away.
4:54 He wrote also concerning. the charges, and the priests' vestments wherein they minister;
4:55 And likewise

for the charges of the Levites, to be given them until the day that the house were finished, and Jerusalem builded up.

4:56 And he commanded to give to all that kept

the city pensions and wages.

4:57 He sent away also all the vessels from Babylon, that Cyrus had set apart; and all that Cyrus had given in commandment, the same charged he also to be done,

and sent unto Jerusalem.

4:58 Now when this young man was gone forth, he lifted up his face to heaven toward Jerusalem, and praised the King of heaven,

4:59 And said,

From thee cometh victory, from thee cometh wisdom, and thine is the glory, and I am thy servant.

4:60 Blessed art thou, who hast given me wisdom: for to thee I give thanks, O Lord of

our fathers.
4:61 And so he took the letters, and went out, and came unto Babylon, and told it all his brethren.
4:62 And they praised the God of their fathers, because he had

given them
freedom and
liberty

4:63 To go up, and to build Jerusalem, and the temple which is called by his name: and they feasted with instruments of musick and

gladness
seven days.